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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/51/619/Add.1)]

51/86. Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

The General Assembly,

Recalling article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[2] the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment[3] and its resolution 39/46 of 10 December 1984, by which it adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and all its subsequent relevant resolutions,

Recalling its resolution 36/151 of 16 December 1981, in which it noted with deep concern that acts of torture took place in various countries, recognized the need to provide assistance to the victims in a purely humanitarian spirit and established the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture,

Recalling the recommendation in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[4]

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[3] Resolution 3452 (XXX), annex.

[4] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

that high priority should be given to providing the necessary resources for assistance to victims of torture and effective remedies for their physical, psychological and social rehabilitation, inter alia, by additional contributions to the Fund,

Noting with satisfaction the existence and rapid expansion of an international network of centres for the rehabilitation of torture victims, which plays an important role in providing assistance to victims of torture, and the collaboration of the Fund with the centres,

1. Welcomes the report of the Committee against Torture,[5] submitted in accordance with the provision of article 24 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

2. Notes with appreciation that during the present reporting period, eight States have become parties to the Convention, increasing the number of States parties to one hundred;

3. Urges all States that have not yet done so to become parties to the Convention as a matter of priority;

4. Invites all States ratifying or acceding to the Convention and those States which are parties to the Convention and which have not yet done so to consider joining the States parties that have already made the declarations provided for in articles 21 and 22 of the Convention and to consider the possibility of withdrawing their reservations to article 20;

5. Urges States parties to comply strictly with their obligations under the Convention, including their obligation to submit reports in accordance with article 19 of the Convention, in view of the high number of reports not submitted;

6. Calls upon all Governments to cooperate with and assist the Special Rapporteur on questions relating to torture in the performance of his task and to supply all necessary information requested by him and to react appropriately to his urgent appeals;

7. Approves the methods of work employed by the Special Rapporteur, in particular as regards urgent appeals, reiterates his need to be able to respond effectively to credible and reliable information that comes before him, invites him to continue to seek the views and comments of all concerned, including Member States, in the elaboration of his report, and expresses its appreciation of the continuing discrete and independent way in which he carries out his work;

8. Stresses the need for regular exchanges of views between the Committee against Torture, the Special Rapporteur and other relevant United Nations mechanisms and bodies, with a view to enhancing further their effectiveness and cooperation on issues relating to torture, inter alia, by improving their coordination;

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[5] Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 44 (A/51/44).

9. Commends the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat for the support given to States in the preparation of national reports to the Committee;

10. Urges States parties to take fully into account the conclusions and recommendations made by the Committee after its consideration of their reports;

11. Urges all States parties to the Convention to notify the Secretary-General of their acceptance of the amendments to articles 17 and 18 of the Convention as soon as possible;

12. Encourages the open-ended working group of the Commission on Human Rights on the elaboration of a draft optional protocol to the Convention to intensify its deliberations with a view to an early conclusion of its work;

13. Expresses its gratitude and appreciation to the Governments, organizations and individuals that have already contributed to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture;

14. Appeals to all Governments, organizations and individuals in a position to do so to respond favourably to requests for contributions to the Fund, if possible on a regular basis and annually before the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Fund and if possible also with a substantial increase in the level of contributions, so that consideration may be given to the ever-increasing demand for assistance;

15. Requests the Secretary-General to transmit to all Governments the appeals of the General Assembly for contributions to the Fund;

16. Also requests the Secretary-General to continue to include the Fund on an annual basis among the programmes for which funds are pledged at the United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities;

17. Expresses its appreciation to the Board of Trustees of the Fund for the work it has accomplished;

18. Requests the Secretary-General to assist the Board of Trustees of the Fund in its appeal for contributions and its efforts to make better known the existence of the Fund and the financial means currently available to it, as well as in its assessment of the global need for international funding of rehabilitation services for torture victims and, in this effort, to make use of all existing possibilities, including the preparation, production and dissemination of information materials;

19. Also requests the Secretary-General to ensure the provision of adequate staff and facilities for the bodies and mechanisms that combat torture, corresponding to the strong support expressed by Member States for combating torture;

20. Invites donor countries and recipient countries that so agree to consider including in their bilateral programmes and projects relating to the training of armed forces and police personnel, as well as health-care personnel, matters relating to the protection of human rights and the prevention of torture;

21. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-third session and to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session a report on the status of the Convention as well as a report on the operations of the Fund;

22. Decides to consider the reports of the Secretary-General and the Committee against Torture at its fifty-third session under the sub-item entitled "Implementation of human rights instruments".

82nd plenary meeting
12 December 1996